

***Request for Qualifications:
Technical Experts on Rural Land Use Issues***

The Indiana Land Resources Council is seeking persons with technical expertise in rural and agricultural land-use issues to join a panel of technical experts to assist Indiana communities.

Context: The growth of animal agriculture, ethanol production, soy diesel production, and other forms of agricultural industry and value-added agriculture have led to new land-use issues in rural Indiana. Indiana counties have traditionally had only one or two planning and zoning categories for the rural areas, allowing everything from single-family residences to intensive production agriculture in the same zoning districts. Agricultural producers, rural residents, and local officials all increasingly recognize the need for improved planning and zoning in rural areas to address these issues effectively. As an advisory body to state government, the Indiana Land Resources Council has identified this complex set of issues as one on which it can and should provide assistance to the people who live in rural Indiana, the businesses that operate there, and the local governments that serve them. As a first step in the process, the Council has recommended model zoning ordinances, to be used as templates or guides for counties that decide to update their ordinances. As a second step, the Council would like to identify a panel of experts who would be available individually or in small teams to assist individual communities in addressing specific needs.

Scope of Services: The Council anticipates two levels of service. Initially, panel members would agree to respond to brief queries by phone or e-mail from local governments needing assistance in their areas of expertise. As a second step, the Council would expect panel members to make strategic consulting services available to communities at an established or fixed fee. The purpose of these services would be narrowly focused on rural land-use issues. It is not the intent of the Council in establishing this program to compete with or usurp the role of consulting firms that are equipped to provide a comprehensive set of services to counties that decide to update their plans or zoning ordinances.

Qualifications: An advanced degree, research background and significant practical experience in one or more technical or land-use issues related to rural Indiana, including but not limited to the following: septic systems and alternative waste disposal systems; operation of CAFOs and other animal agricultural facilities; regulation of CAFOs and other animal agricultural facilities; odor mitigation; water quality management, particularly as it relates to non-point source pollution; public health effects of animal agriculture; wetlands; rural habitat; agricultural economics; rural roads and transportation; site planning for rural uses; comprehensive planning and zoning; stormwater management in rural areas. Individuals with college or university affiliations are preferred.

Limitations: The Council wants to create a credible panel that can approach issues objectively. Thus, owners, officers, partners or employees of intensive agricultural operations (other than row crop farms), employees, officers, directors or volunteers for trade or advocacy groups involved with these issues will be excluded from the panel.

Application: Please submit current Curriculum Vitae, names and contact information for at least three references, and a brief summary of related areas of expertise to: Sarah Simpson, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, 101 W Ohio Street, Suite 1200, Indianapolis, IN 46204; sasimpson@isda.in.gov; (317) 460-6380.